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## MINOR EDITORIALS.

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### FREE INVESTIGATION.

THE following is a fair specimen of numerous communications which have come to hand during the past month :

BOSTON, Aug. 5, 1895.

*To the Editor of The American Journal of Sociology :*

DEAR SIR : I have just received your interesting circular. I have the highest respect for the able members of the University faculty who are at the head of the undertaking and for the scholars who are coöperating with them. But I feel it a duty to say that I can look for no lasting good from a work that is conducted by an educational institution founded by the arch-robber of America and which already, by its treatment of Professor Bemis, exhibits a determination to throttle free investigation of sociological or economic subjects wherever there is any danger of running counter to plutocratic interests. For this reason I regard the tendency to make our higher educational institutions in this country dependent upon private benefactions a very serious menace to the cause of scientific truth, and calculated to make our scholars timorous and truculent, rather than fearlessly devoted to arriving at the truth, pure and simple, as science demands. Very truly yours,

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It is no part of the mission of this JOURNAL to eulogize, still less to defend The University of Chicago, its founder, its faculty or its policy. Neither do we propose to use the pages of the JOURNAL in apology for its own conduct. The contents will justify or condemn themselves. We refer to the above letter just as we would if it concerned matters with which we were personally familiar at Harvard, or Cornell, or Leland Stanford.

The specific reason alleged for lack of confidence in the JOURNAL rests upon grounds which persons acquainted with the facts know to be utterly and ludicrously imaginary. We may therefore be pardoned for declining to treat it in the most serious vein. Our correspondent's easy surrender to appearances, in his phrase "timorous and truculent," gives reason for pointing a moral without strenuous effort.

The alliteration is forceful, but the ideas thus associated seem to be

mutually nullifying. The timorous man, when brought to bay, may in desperation become "truculent," but that is not his normal and characteristic state. Can it be that our correspondent was betrayed into confounding the "truculent" man with the *trucker*? If so, his lameness in etymology comports well with his obliqueness of vision in economics and sociology.

Our friend illustrates the facility with which many men zealous for social weal assume their facts and extemporize their conclusions. One of the most constant aims of this JOURNAL will be to assist in reforming this vice. In three chief particulars the letter cited exemplifies familiar faults of lapse from scientific method in thinking. First, in the truly truculent epithet "arch-robber of America." We do not believe that this classification is correct. With due regard for recognized canons of induction it would be competent to make the phrase the working hypothesis in further investigation of the character of the man so disposed of. The presumption is of course scientifically admissible that he is personally, and as an industrial factor, the evil agent alleged. The evidence in our possession leads us to adopt a different presumption. Meanwhile for us to volunteer a vindication of his character would perhaps be a degree more impertinent than for us to assail his motives or his acts.

Waiving personalities then, we take this opportunity to remark that it is possible to serve the cause of justice and to promote the common weal without begging social questions, and without joining in vulgar denunciations of social factors which after all may prove to be social blessings. Great organizers of industry control power to do great injustice, and in many cases they have flagrantly misused that power. Whenever this is done it is more culpable than the sins of men who are less responsible. Wrong is wrong, no matter how many hospitals and churches and colleges are built by the men who commit it. On the other hand it is far from certain that the most confident critics of industrial order are always competent judges of industrial wrongs. They certainly are not if they are incapable of distinguishing between the use and the abuse of organization and of aggregated capital. It is both wrong and stupid for people to provoke each other into spasms of indignation against colossal business organizations in general, or against the managers of vast industrial operations, as such. This JOURNAL will not be equivocal in exposing the usurpations of capitalism, or in explaining principles to which the people must learn to hold

corporations accountable. We believe that what we shall have to say on these subjects will have the more weight if our policy is obviously controlled by judgment in which a measure of intelligence is apparent about the function of aggregated capital.

The fact is that our era is a period of experimentation with almost untried possibilities of industrial combination. It is quite possible that the organization of production and circulation and distribution toward which we are tending will be so different from present arrangements that all attempts to imagine it are at fault. This being the case, we oppose to the assumption that industrial combination is robbery, the counter assumption that industrial combination is progress. The final truth doubtless lies somewhere between these two extremes; viz., perfected combination, restrained and controlled by just principles, and operated in all its departments by just men, will signalize an advanced social condition. The substitution of more for less effective industrial organization may necessarily, as in the substitution of machinery for hand labor, involve enormous hardship to individuals. The men who are devising and testing new powers of organization may nevertheless, like the great mechanical inventors, turn out to have done more for the human race in applying their talents to industrial administration, than through the sum of their acknowledged benefactions, by which ignorant people assume that rich men alone justify their existence.

Our correspondent exemplifies a defective method of thought, second, in his allusion to Professor Bemis. Certain newspapers, for reasons about which it is needless to speculate, have labored to create the impression that the relations of Professor Bemis to the University of Chicago are of public interest, because he is the victim of gag-rule in that institution. The only persons who know the facts have repeatedly assured representatives of the press that nothing in the case is of any interest to the public, because no principle in which the public is concerned is in any way involved. The reference above nevertheless presupposes the right to believe anonymous newspaper writers, and to reject the statements of responsible University officials.

When the veracity of persons in a *quasi* public position has thus been challenged by the newspapers, there is room for difference of opinion about the wisdom of further utterances in support of previous denials. Thus far, and in our judgment for good and sufficient reasons, the authorities of The University of Chicago have adopted one

opinion on this subject, while some of the newspapers have expressed another. Under such circumstances it would seem that persons soberly in search of truth would decide that, even if they cannot accept the assurances of the University as finalities, suspension of judgment is necessary until demonstrative evidence appears.

Professor Bemis is a contributor to this number of the JOURNAL, and we shall be glad to publish articles from his pen in the future upon any subject which he is competent to discuss. We should be especially pleased to present his own exposition of any doctrines which any person of authority or influence in connection with the University of Chicago has ever called in question. The liberty assured to him here is in no respect greater than that which every instructor enjoys as a matter of course at Chicago. In other words, as representatives of the University have repeatedly testified, and as we personally know to be the fact, freedom of thought and freedom of instruction is in no way involved in Professor Bemis' relations with the University. "A determination to throttle free investigation" has never in any way made its appearance in this or any other case within the University, except in the imagination of interested parties.

We reiterate this oft-repeated statement not because the affairs of the University of Chicago deserve special prominence in this JOURNAL, but to show the irrelevance of our correspondent's allusion, and the inconsequence of his reasoning. Even if these assertions are of no more intrinsic weight than those of editors and reporters who make contradictory representations, they are certainly of sufficient significance to raise doubts in a scientific mind about the validity of the inference concerning this JOURNAL.

In the third place, the letter exemplifies one of the most vicious forms of *a priori* reasoning. Its circle of fallacy is: first, all institutions founded by private wealth are the tools of private interest; second, because The University of Chicago is a tool of private interest, therefore no good thing can come from it in the way of social science. Argument of this sort proves nothing except the unscientific attitude of the minds which it satisfies. The foundation of the University of Chicago was hardly announced when the same kind of dogmatism settled the character of the religious influence which it would exert. "An institution founded by a single religious denomination must be narrow and bigoted; *ergo*, etc." Facts, with their traditional stubbornness, have already estopped that line of attack, but now an altera-

tion in the indictment and a change of venue is the signal for more volleys of the same blank logic.

We wonder how people can take themselves seriously, who think they are prepared for social science, while they prefer to evolve their knowledge from prejudice and hearsay, rather than to await the demonstration of fact. This JOURNAL asks no favor, and it expects no mercy. It proposes, however, to deserve respect. We believe that it will commend itself to the large number of Americans who wish to study society candidly and are capable of judging scientific work upon its merits.

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### SOCIAL VS. SOCIOLOGICAL.

IN an article entitled *What is Sociology?* Dr. Samuel W. Dike speaks with his usual wisdom upon two topics of interest to our readers. We quote his words upon the first subject the more readily because we appropriated, without criticism, in our first issue, a part of the symposium to which Dr. Dike quite justly refers. He says:<sup>1</sup>

"Another point is the service which popular writers and speakers may render by a careful use of the words *sociological* and *social*, as well as of the word *sociology* itself. Suppose we all follow the lead of the scientific men and of the best writers, and make the proper distinction between the words *social* and *sociological* that we are all accustomed to make between the terms *religious* and *theological*. No intelligent clergyman would think of speaking of a religious problem as a theological problem, unless he wished to call attention directly to its theological, in the sense of scientific aspects rather than to its practical character. A mistake of this sort would betray ignorance or gross heedlessness in writing and speaking. Now, if writers, and especially editors, professors of social ethics in our theological seminaries, and preachers, will say simply 'social' when that is all they mean, and talk of social rather than of sociological problems when all they have in mind is the practical or generally intelligent treatment of social topics, and not be constantly confusing their readers and themselves by an indiscriminate use of the word 'sociological' in both senses, they will do the science and the people a great service. The practice would clear up a good deal of fog.

"An aggravating case of the need of this discrimination is now

<sup>1</sup>*The Homiletic Review*, August, 1895, p. 175.

before me. A religious newspaper of good standing gets a professor of sociology (in a theological seminary, it is true, rather than from a university) and an able doctor of divinity to write articles on 'the present sociological movement.' They assume, and rightly in all probability, that they are desired to discuss the present *social* movement, and not the progress in the science of sociology, which alone is the sociological movement. Yet the reader finds in both these writers only an occasional approach in all their articles to any appreciation of the fact that 'social' and 'sociological' are words having very distinct meanings, and he will quickly see that their articles would be helpful just in proportion to their careful observance of the difference between them."

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### CHRISTIAN SOCIOLOGY.

ON the other topic Dr. Dike says, with equal precision :<sup>1</sup>

"Christian Sociology is a term that may have a certain but limited scientific value. For the Bible, Christianity, and the church have a great deal to do with social problems or with 'the social problem,' as the rather vague popular generalization puts it. But their relation to social problems or subjects is one thing, and their relation to the problems of sociology as a science is quite another. The one is chiefly within the field of practical religion; the other comes mainly within the realm of science, where the Bible is silent so far as any positive teaching goes.

"Christianity is found in the very warp and woof of human social life. Its institutions are part of the material of human society. Christianity is a tremendous social force, and its sacred books are a mine of rich sociological material, which has been hardly opened by the sociologist as it should be. These resources are therefore indispensable to the sociologist. They are so great and important that he may well treat them under the appropriately scientific title of Christian Sociology. But when he does this he will mean by the phrase something like that which is meant when the scientific men speak of Australian Botany, or the Botany of the United States or of Massachusetts. Yet this does not imply that we are to have a Christian science of society, but rather that our science has taken Christianity into its field, and as one great section of it, as it should do. To go to work determining the title, principles and methods of the science by the dis-

<sup>1</sup> *Idem.*, p. 176.

closures of the Christian religion is as foolish as were the old attempts to adjust astronomy and geology to the Bible. The time for that sort of work is gone by, just as chairs in theological seminaries for the adjustment of the relations between science and revealed religion are going out of favor. A robust Christianity has little use for such props.

"It is in the practical work of social improvement that we must draw most heavily on the resources of Christianity. Social science will bring us material, put it in its order, and help us to a sound understanding of it, and we shall use it more than ever before. From Christianity, on the other hand, we shall get the highest scientific incentive, inspiration to the love of truth, to docility, and to the diligent use of scientific resources, just as we do in any of the other sciences, but to a greater amount, because of the dominance of the social elements in the field of religion.

"Christian sociology as a popular catchword for the science, or as a phrase for those who have lent their minds to certain preconceived theories beyond recovery, will have its run. But unless I greatly mistake the trend of thought, its course among educated people is nearly at an end. And if those who stand nearest the people in the pulpit, press, and on the platform, will be careful in their use of terms, the better thought and usage will soon prevail."

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#### OUR CORRESPONDENCE DEPARTMENT.

WE desire to make the JOURNAL supply the place of a teacher, so far as possible, in the case of all classes of students who are unable to get into direct contact with living instructors. Our department "SEMINAR NOTES" is intended for answers to correspondents on all subjects which naturally arise when the attempt is made to pursue the study of society independently. We wish to afford the same kind of help to our readers that seminar students receive from their director. We do not mean to encourage the supposition that the living teacher, and the environment of scholarship and research are luxuries for which there are cheap substitutes. We wish however to make the JOURNAL a means of partially offsetting the disadvantage of never having had instruction in the subjects with which we deal, and also of promoting the continuance of social studies that were begun in college or university.

We therefore invite all our readers to propose by mail any questions about methods of study, sources of information, bibliography, etc.,



which they cannot otherwise answer. We cannot promise to make satisfactory replies in every instance, but the editors will give correspondents the benefit of the best information within their reach, and will call upon other specialists for assistance.

It must be observed that the JOURNAL does not offer itself as an encyclopædia nor as an oracle of opinion upon the endless miscellany of propositions for social reorganization. All possible help will be given upon the methodology and bibliography of social science in its various departments.